

Top Secret

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DIRECTORATE OF
INTELLIGENCE

Intelligence Memorandum

*Sino-Soviet Arrangement for Transit of Aid
to North Vietnam*

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
Directorate of Intelligence
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INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

Sino-Soviet Arrangement For Transit
Of Aid to North Vietnam

1. Members of both the Soviet and Rumanian missions at the UN have recently spoken about a Soviet-Chinese agreement to facilitate the transit across China of Soviet military aid for North Vietnam in terms which suggest that such an agreement is a fact. Whether this is so or not, both Moscow and Hanoi may not wish to have it thought that the North Vietnamese have been weakened by the Sino-Soviet quarrel.

3. In support of these assertions, the virtual disappearance of Soviet charges of Chinese interference with aid shipments has been cited. These Soviet allegations were at their height during the worst stage of the Sino-Soviet dispute last February and declined soon after the

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tension subsided. Their intensity may well have reflected the heat of the dispute rather than the degree of Chinese obstruction. There was no indication that the flow of Soviet supplies had significantly diminished.

Hanoi may have been seeking reassurance that the Sino-Soviet hostility would not impair the North Vietnamese military position.

6. None of this evidence is strong enough to allow a conclusion that a new formalized agreement on aid transit has been reached. It may be however, that both China and the USSR, possibly at Hanoi's behest, have agreed to smooth out any rough spots in transit arrangements and drop public recriminations on the issue. A Sino-Soviet protocol governing such arrangements was signed in March 1965 and may have come due for renewal last month in any case. All the evidence over the past two years indicates that Sino-Soviet differences have not appreciably affected the delivery of Soviet equipment. A new working arrangement, while it might help to allay Hanoi's apprehensions, would not in itself significantly affect the scale of Soviet aid.

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7. The statements by the Communist representatives at the UN [] do not pertain to the volume of aid. However, in view of recent claims by the Soviets that their aid is continuing to increase, following a reported visit to Moscow by top-level North Vietnamese, a rise in the quantities of total deliveries may be in store. An increase in deliveries of non-military supplies by sea during the first quarter of 1967 has already been noted.

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